

Forest and Stream

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THE CAPTURE OF HOWELL

We published last week a brief telegram, announcing the capture of the notorious poacher Howell with the skins and hides of ten of the National Park buffalo which he had killed near Astringent Creek, in the Hayden Valley. This news was exclusively for the *Forest and Stream*, none of the other papers, either daily or weekly, have learned of it, but two or three days after its publication in *Forest and Stream*, a general press despatch appeared in all the papers, announcing that hunters were committing depredations in the Park and explaining that this was due to the laxness of Congress in failing to provide any law by which such depredations can be punished.

As stated in the *Forest and Stream*, the capture was made by Burgess, the Park scout, and a full and detailed account of it will shortly appear. In the meantime we are able to give some facts connected with the capture which cannot fail to be of interest.

On Tuesday, March 13, in obedience to orders received from Capt. George S. Anderson, Burgess left the Lake Hotel for the Pelican Creek, traveling of course on snowshoes. That night he spent not far from Broad Creek and a few miles northwest of Fern Lake. Early the next morning, very soon after starting out, he struck an old trail of snowshoes, and following it up stumbled upon a cache of six buffalo scalps and six skins, from three of which the hair had been partially removed as if for the manufacture of rawhide. He took this plunder in and passed on to the south until he had come near the mouth of the Astringent Creek, where he again struck a snowshoe trail, this time freshly made. Following it up he came to the lodge belonging to the traveler, which was pitched about two miles northwest of the mouth of Astringent Creek. While waiting here Burgess heard some shots, and soon located his man, whom he found on the north bank of Pelican Creek, about one mile west of the Astringent Creek.

The man was busy skinning the buffalo, and five of these animals lay about him. Burgess rushed upon him, and Howell was so occupied with his work that he did not see his captor until he was close to him. He had no time to think about making any resistance, but threw up his hands at once. Burgess brought him in and reached his guard house at Fort Sheridan at about 4:30 on Wednesday, March 14. Howell is now confined there, and will no doubt remain until news has been received from Washington as to what is to be done with him.

A party from the post was at that time at the lake, and at the date of our advices were about to begin to bring in the plunder.

There have been at least eleven buffalo killed and no one knows how many more. It is certain that Howell has been in the Park several times during the winter, and it is not very unlikely that he may have killed a large number of these animals. It is evident that unless something is done at once to make poaching a crime, the Yellowstone Park buffalo will very soon be wholly exterminated.